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# IGNATIUS LOYOLA

THE SAINT WHO  
UNDERSTOOD PEOPLE  
BY RAYMOND E. BERNARD, S.J.



A QUEEN'S WORK  
PAMPHLET



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THE QUEEN'S WORK

# IGNATIUS LOYOLA

## The Saint Who Understood People

Would you think that I was letting a skeleton out of the closet if I say that Ignatius Loyola was once arrested for brawling in a tavern? Or that he spent much time, before his 26th birthday, writing love poems to a beautiful woman?

One of his closest associates, Polanco, close friend and confidante, later in their acquaintance wrote: "Though he always remained faithfully attached to his religion, still he did not always live according to its prescriptions and was not always on guard against sin; he especially indulged in gambling, duelling, and romances with women."

And the *corregidor*, before whom Inigo and his brother were charged, remarked that the young man showed the marks of worldly rather than of heavenly battling. These remarks are in the record for any eye to see.

### Early Years

Some biographers—among them Christopher Hollis—claim that these incidents marked the soldier Ignatius as a "great lover," a man of tremendous loyalties and strong enthusiasm. Ignatius himself used to say that the qualities that made for earthly success also make for spiritual success.

In all these incidents of his early life—and there must have been many, for Maffei (an early biographer) says that the young soldier gave himself to “blundering wickedness”—Ignatius actually conquered a highly affectionate nature and redirected an “inordinate” affection. He was never so strongly gripped by any vice that he was forever its slave. He kept his ideals, his love of beauty, his sensitiveness to the romance of life, and especially a great capacity for affection.

His youth was a period of his life which he always referred to as years in which he lived as a great sinner. Thus we have only touched upon something which Ignatius publicly and often acknowledged.

“The saints have all, I think, been great lovers, men and women of strong passions, and a fair proportion of them—from St. Mary Magdalen and St. Augustine onwards—have been men and women whose strong passions led them sadly astray before they came to the love of God. . . . Every Don Juan was once a potential saint; every saint was once a potential debauchee or harlot”—Hollis (p. 18).

When Ferdinand of Aragon and Ignatius’ superior, Velasquez, died, Ignatius thought it well to leave the wearying life of the royal court and to seek his future and adventure in the wars. After some brief questing of honor in the local cam-



paigns, in which Navarre became a sort of prize for the strongest comers, Ignatius found himself in practical command of a small fortress at Pampeluna while it was facing attack from French forces. It was here, on Pentecost Tuesday, May 20, 1521, that a cannonball struck a stone in the citadel wall, and sent the stone crashing against Ignatius' legs. The stone shattered his right leg.

It took two operations on the bone to make it somewhat decent—but it was necessary to saw some protruding part and to stretch his leg by iron weights—simply because the five-foot-two warrior wanted properly to be able to wear the fashionable kind of boot and legging. He later called this period of suffering his “martyrdom of vanity.”

While he dragged along in convalescence, Inigo asked for some books about great deeds of love and war with which to occupy himself, but there was not one in the castle.

Instead they found and brought him a *Life of Our Savior* by the monk Rudolph of Saxony and a collection of saints' lives titled *Flos Sanctorum* (Flowers of the Saints). He wasn't anxious to read these, but there was not much else to do.

Strange, he thought, that the saints had really done wonderful things—as wonderful as any deeds of soldiers. They

even outshone soldiers, made soldiers look like children—made Ignatius, too, look like a child. Couldn't he do as much as they?

In the spring of 1522 Ignatius left his place of recovery, with his mind reset as much as his bone—he was off to Jerusalem as a pilgrim. On his way he stopped at Our Lady of Montserrat, a Spanish shrine near a great Benedictine abbey, and spent a vigil night of prayer before her altar. He had persuaded a poor pilgrim to exchange clothes—his nobleman's suit for rags.

### **The Wanderer**

Then Ignatius set out limping over a mountain path toward the country village of Manresa, where he encountered a party of pious pilgrims returning from Mass at Montserrat. A woman of the group took pity on the nobleman in poor clothes who limped along beside their party. At Manresa she had him installed at a hostel and offered him food from her own table. Probably the wanderer meant to stay a few days to get back some strength before setting out in earnest for the Holy Land.

Anyway, he remained in this small country village until February 1523—nearly a year. He made a general confession that took three days. Every day he went to Mass, vespers, and compline, besides spending seven hours in private



devotions. He slept on the floor, with a log or stone as his pillow, ate black bread only once a day and drank nothing but water. He wore neither shoes nor hat. He bound his waist with a heavy iron chain under his sackcloth dress. He kept away from the polite company of the town and mixed with the very lowest type. Soon these people themselves began to insult him because of his shoddy appearance and the children used to run shouting behind him.

Still he wanted more solitude and isolation. He found a cave by a river where he could retire. There he underwent a series of assaults by the devil and strengthened his resistance by almost unbelievable mortifications—such as not eating or drinking for a week, until his confessor commanded him to eat or not receive absolution. In all this practice of severe asceticism Ignatius was not a fanatic—he was rather trying to master his own personal inclinations and affections because he felt that these hindered him in his effort to love God. Later in life he would not undergo such rigorous penance or require it of his followers (so that the Dominican critic Melchior Cano complained that Jesuits did little flagellation). All these experiences and his penances finally, as we might expect, broke his health.

Now at last he mitigated his ascetical practices, and spent some time in the homes of two friendly men.

Then he left for Barcelona, there to take ship for Italy and obtain a pilgrim's license to visit the Holy Land. The eastern Mediterranean was the scene of much battling between the Turks and the Christians, so that a pass was needed for any wayfarer to get through the trouble zone.

Two weeks after landing at Naples, Ignatius had visited Rome, received his license and gone up to Venice, from which he hoped to sail for the East. Without any knowledge of Italian, without funds (he had given away every coin he had received) he still found help from pious persons and secured free passage to Cyprus.

Finally Ignatius entered Jerusalem on September 4, 1523. It had taken a long time to reach it, but the consolation and inspiration he experienced in visiting Gethsemane made the trouble and time negligible. He told a Barcelona friend, Inez Pascual, in a letter that he kissed the ground at the place of Christ's agony in the Garden again and again, so overcome was he by emotion.

Now he began to think about setting up a group of men who would be devoted to religious ideals—along the way, especially at Manresa, he had received a light on this possibility.

After he consulted with local officials, Ignatius was firmly but kindly advised to

return home. Christians were only tolerated in the Holy Land, under the strictest conditions, and the Catholic authority—a Franciscan—thought the situation too delicate to run any further risk at the moment. One little episode of his visit was the sort of thing the authorities wished to avoid: Ignatius went out of bounds to visit the place traditionally held to be the scene of the Ascension, and he twice bribed the guards in order to pass along.

### **The Belated Student**

The sea voyage home took two and a half months, so that the returning pilgrim made some more realistic plans than heretofore. From Venice he would return overland to Spain and there undertake his education. By Ferrara he went on to Genoa, where again he hitchhiked a passage on a Spanish galley to Barcelona (early March 1524).

Given a place to stay by Inez Pascual and books by her brother (a priest), Ignatius enrolled himself at a school, a man of 33 sitting among youngsters. Ignatius was hardly showing affectation—rather he was trying to show that reason should rule the emotional life, a lesson he was truly learning.

His other lessons did not fare so well. The Latin verb *amo* (I love) sent his mind soaring in love of God and he was constantly distracted from his books.

In Barcelona during these delayed school days, just as at Manresa, Ignatius attracted a number of followers, chiefly women, and also a number of critics and enemies. The women wanted aid in their spiritual life, the enemies saw no good reason why anyone should want aid or reformation, and they threatened Ignatius.

A Dominican nunnery, like many other religious houses of Europe at that period, had slid into corrupt practices. It was visited by young men of bad reputation at any hour of day and night. Ignatius heard of and saw the situation, but decided he would pray the nuns into a reform. They curiously asked who this recollected student was who spent hours in their church. Then Ignatius spoke seriously with them—and soon they mended their ways. The dissolute men who no longer could enter the convent at their desire grew furious at Ignatius and beat him twice, then had him attacked so severely by paid assassins that he was near death for 30 days.

Two years of plugging at Latin [elements] made Ignatius ready for the University of Alcala. He had picked up three young men as prospects for his projected society, and a fourth joined them at Alcala. These and several of the persons whose gross immorality was so notorious that Ignatius spoke severely to them all somehow were captivated by this barefoot



beggar-student. His brother had long ago told him he had a genius for making friends: a something "which seems like magic in you."

Some of his teachings also sounded unusual to the authorities of his day. He recommended a more frequent participation in the sacraments—long before the Council of Trent—and centuries before St. Pius X. He urged his followers to receive every Sunday and holyday—against the belief of many conscientious churchmen who felt that an irreverent familiarity could easily arise from such a practice.

All the Spanish holy persons of the period came under investigation by the Inquisition, sooner or later. St. Teresa, Blessed John of Avila, St. John of the Cross, Luis Granada, and others had to submit their experiences to the judges of that investigating committee. And sometimes heresies turned up—such as *los Alumbados*, the Enlightened, who held that for a man of interior prayer both good works and the sacraments were unnecessary, and the foulest immoralities were for him no sin. Ignatius underwent his check-up in turn, but he and his followers were given a clean bill of moral and theological health.

But through an impetuous professor's misunderstanding, a charge was laid upon him in his absence and he was clapped into prison on his return to Alcala. Ulti-

mately this accusation was clearly proved groundless—yet a ruling came from the officials that Ignatius' little band had to dress like ordinary students and was forbidden to hold any public or private conferences until its members had done all their theological study. On this point Christopher Hollis makes a cogent remark:

There is something horribly reminiscent of Pontius Pilate in a verdict of "not guilty, but do not do it again." It was not only the infamous Borgia Popes and worldly monks which brought on the troubles of the 16th century. They were brought on just as much by rows of honest Figueroas dismissing Ignatiuses without a stain on their characters but bidding them keep quiet for the sake of peace, until at last the satire of Erasmus rises uncontrollably or the ill-balanced mind of a Luther explodes in despair that justice can ever come out of a regular machinery.

Ignatius decided the time was at hand for moving from Alcala to the University of Salamanca (summer 1527). Hardly had he done so when he ran into continued trouble (Hollis, p. 96).

After showing great interest and hospitality to Ignatius, the Dominicans of the Monastery of St. Stephen interrogated him, locked him and his companions for three days in the monastery, then sent them on to the prison of the Inquisition.



There, with much questioning and mistreatment, they remained for 22 days. Again the investigation found no error in theology and canon law, but gave the same sentence as at Alcala—"not guilty, but do not do it again."

Once more, Ignatius felt he could not remain under such groundless prohibition and decided to leave Salamanca, cross the Pyrenees, and go to Paris.

There at the great university he ran into difficulty when a fellow-lodger spent his money. This loss sent him back to begging. He solved the problem of finances in his student life by going every summer to beg among his wealthy countrymen in Flanders, and once he went to England.

Then three of his fellow students who were also Spaniards were looked upon as rash by the authorities, because after they had made the Spiritual Exercises they sold all their possessions. Again he came up against the Inquisition, and again was cleared—with no restriction! In October 1529, he actually began the study of philosophy at the College of Santa Barbara.

Before long, complaints against Ignatius were piling up. The man had deliberately visited a plague-ridden house and returned to his companions at Santa Barbara. He had led many students to skip academic routines and go instead to church. He

was upsetting university discipline. However, at the last moment before a public whipping, Ignatius was vindicated by the rector of the university.

Things got better. No longer any need for such begging, no more systematic preaching and converting, and finally the attainment of a Master of Arts degree in March 1534. True, he had lost the early associates of Alcala, and his later trio at Paris, but he did meet many others. A particularly happy acquaintanceship was struck up between Ignatius and Peter Faber, a remarkable young fellow and now Blessed Peter Faber on the rolls of the Church. Faber was the first member of the permanent group to be gathered by Ignatius. He was the first priest among the members Ignatius recruited there at Paris, and he joined up because of the Spiritual Exercises.

For 12 years Faber continued as one of the most fruitful members. It was gentle and sweet Faber who won over Francis Borgia, the duke of Gandia, later St. Francis Borgia, and Peter Canisius, also later a saint, who labored so strenuously as to be known today as the Apostle of Germany.

When a little company was formed, this young priest, a Savoyard, celebrated the Mass at Montmartre, August 15, 1534, when Ignatius and six followers pronounced the vows of poverty and chastity,

adding the alternate promise of going to Palestine or placing themselves at the disposal of the Pope.

The group thereafter began to move as a body. Ignatius himself was ordained priest in Venice, June 24, 1537. Finally coming to a standstill in Rome Ignatius and his "Company of Jesus" (for so they came to be called) offered their services to the Holy Father. On September 27, 1540, Pope Paul III approved the preliminary draft of "The Constitutions."

In April 1541, Ignatius, in spite of his reluctance to assume the office, was elected Superior General. On April 22 he and his companions made their profession in the Church of St. Paul, Outside the Walls. The Society of Jesus was now fully constituted.

### Expansion

The early Jesuit Foundations were "halls for religious students," rather residences than separate schools. But the whole movement spread rapidly.

In Spain and Portugal the new order expanded. The Portuguese colonies in Asia, Africa, and America begged for spiritual aid—thus Francis Xavier had a wide-open field waiting for his work. Spain furnished many good recruits to the order, rather than great opportunity, and gave a good reception generally to the Jesuits. Germany also came to a

quick flower, and Jesuit theologians accompanied the legates who planned the Council of Trent. By 1556 a German province was set up, with Canisius as its head.

In England little opportunity was open, with Henry VIII sitting in power. Apparently only trouble could be expected by any representatives Ignatius might send to the British Isles at this time.

As Ireland seemed more promising, Ignatius sent two men there. After much difficulty, both en route and in the country, they returned to France. Meantime orders had been sent them to work in Scotland, but were received too late. (They did touch on Scotland on their way into Ireland.) Perhaps much could have been changed in the religious history of Scotland had these instructions been received as intended.

This early growth and assignment of pioneer missionaries shows that Ignatius had no narrow scruples about confining his associates' work to a single country, but that he intended they should all work for the Church at large under the closest direction of the Pope. No land was to be too distant or forbidding, no tyrant too dangerous for the ultimate building up of the Body of Christ.

Although England and Ireland were too tightly under the hand of the English ruler for any extensive or successful effort



at the moment by the two foreign priests, still Ignatius wondered if a seminary college for British Catholic aspirants could not be advantageously started at Rome. He so persisted in his suggestion that eventually the arrangement was set up.

When Pope Paul III decided to resume the sessions of the Council of Trent in 1546-1547 (the second session), he simply called Ignatius and asked him to appoint some of his followers "papal theologians." These men, Lainez and Salmeron, had much to do with the arrangement, the codifying proposals and the reports of the different commissions. Peter Canisius was also present for subsequent meetings. At the Council many Bishops were so favorably impressed by the zeal and learning of these theologians who visited the poor and sick in their free moments, that later they made sure to introduce the Jesuit order into their own dioceses.

Ignatius set up a "House of St. Martha," to protect fallen women who repented and two orphanages. He organized retreats and sent out missionaries, but refused to restrict the labors of his men to any single field.

Letters written by the former military man during his years at Rome tell us much about his character. What did he aim to do? What were the thoughts he was thinking as he molded this little "Company of Jesus" into troops the Pope

could personally send on any mission for the Church?

From a letter written as early as December 1540, St. Ignatius gives us a glimpse which reveals some of his own internal convictions and his aspirations. "His Divine Majesty well knows how much and how many times He has stirred in me the intense will and eager desire to be able in any way, even the least, to give all pleasure and do all spiritual service in His divine goodness to all inhabitants, men and women, of the land in which God our Lord, with His love and mercy, without any desert of mine, and without my being able to make Him any return, gave me my first beginning and my natural being. These same desires, received rather from Our Lord and universal Creator than through any creature, drew me from Paris to your town, now some five years ago, when my bodily health was not good; and on that occasion, as you saw, with His customary mercy, He who sent me to you gave me also strength to carry out no small amount of work. What I then left undone must be attributed to my own shortcomings which accompany me everywhere.

"And even now I am animated by the same desires. I long that in all things your soul should be quiet and peaceful, with the true peace of Our Lord, not merely with the peace of this world. For



in this world many princes great and small conclude external truce and peace, but internal peace never enters into their hearts; rather there abides in them rancor, envy and evil desires against those with whom they have made external peace. But the peace of Our Lord which is interior brings in its train all the other gifts and graces that we need for salvation and eternal life. For that peace makes us love our neighbor for the love of his Creator and Lord; and if we love with that love all the commandments of the Lord are kept, according to the words of St. Paul: 'He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.' Such a man has complied with all the law because he loves his Creator and Lord, and his neighbor for His sake."

### **Promoter of Frequent Communion**

St. Ignatius was a firm believer in the practice of frequent Communion and all through his life, he tried to encourage this devotion. "As [to] the practice of daily Communion," he once said in an early letter, "let us remember that in the primitive church all went to Communion every day, and that from that time to this there has been no order or writing of our Holy Mother the Church, or of holy doctors, scholastic or positive, prohibiting those whose devotion so moves them from receiving Communion every day. Let us remember, too, that the Blessed

St. Augustine says that he neither praises nor blames daily Communion, adding elsewhere that he exhorts all to Communion on all Sundays, and in another place, speaking of the most sacred Body of Christ Our Lord: 'This bread is daily bread; therefore so live that you may receive it every day.' This being the case, even if there are not so many good indications and sound inspirations to encourage you, yet the very good judgment of your conscience is testimony good and entire enough. And its dictate is, that since all is licit to you in Our Lord, if you judge yourself free from manifest mortal sin, and such sins as you may judge to be mortal, and your soul desires more sustenance, and is more inflamed with the love of our Creator and Lord, and if with such intention you communicate, finding by experience that this most holy spiritual food supports, calms, and rests you, and while preserving you raises you also in His greater service, praise and glory, then without any doubt it is licit, indeed it will be better for you to communicate every day."

His ideals were always set high, for Pope, for Bishop, for priest and layman.

St. Ignatius had some clear words of very noble exhortation to those who chose to be his close followers in the Society of Jesus. In a letter to the Fathers and Brothers at Coimbra he wrote: ". . . another reason why He has called you is that these abject things might not engross

your understanding and your love, and distract and scatter them on every side but that you might concentrate yourself and be turned in one direction, being occupied in that alone for which God created you, which is His honor and glory, your own salvation and the succor of your neighbor.

“And although all institutions of the Christian life tend to this object, still God has called you to this one in particular in which, not in any general way, but with the oblation of your own life and all your energies you are asked to make a continuous sacrifice of yourselves to the glory of God and the salvation of your neighbor, cooperating towards it not only with example and earnest prayer, but with all other external means, which His Divine providence has created that we may the better help one another. Hence it is not difficult to understand how noble indeed, indeed how royal, is the mode of life you have adopted; for not only amongst men, but even amongst angels no nobler kind of life can be imagined than that of glorifying God, and of drawing all creatures to Him so far as they are capable of that attraction.”

The thought of commerce-minded men and greedy monarchs, for a curious reason, seemed always to be a special encouragement to Ignatius to labor harder for Christ. “. . . As an example let each one

set before himself not those who are inclined to do less, but the most eager and the most strenuous. Do not allow the children of this world to excel you in seeking temporal things with more solicitude and diligence than you seek those that are eternal. Let it be a matter of shame to you if they rush to death more promptly than you to life. Hold yourselves in little esteem if a courtier serves more diligently to gain the favor of an earthly prince than you for that of a heavenly monarch, and if a soldier for the glory of victory and a little booty makes better preparation and fights more bravely than you for the victory and triumph over the world, the devil, and your own selves, together with the gaining of the eternal kingdom and glory.

“. . . What I have said so far to awaken those that may be sleeping, and to spur on those who may be lagging or loitering along the road, must not be so understood as to constitute a plea for falling into the opposite extreme of indiscreet fervor. For spiritual sickness proceeds not only from chilling causes, such as tepidity, but also from heated causes, such as excessive fervor.”

In all these sentences one can see the man thoroughly set on seeking God's greater glory, and that alone.

The Jesuit writer Rahner sees reflections of Ignatius' life and background as

necessarily shown in the genuine follower of the saint.

“By his very lineage Ignatius was fitted to found a ‘Company,’ to plan and bring into existence an Order that would be the embodiment of the words *senalarse mas en servicio*, ‘to distinguish oneself more in the service of God.’ The foundation for two of the more characteristic qualities of his Society, obedience and discipline, seems to have been laid in the natural preparation of Ignatius for the lifework marked out for him by God.

“. . . Like Inigo at Arevalo, every Jesuit is a member of a royal household, is ever ready for service in the household of his king, who is constantly changing his place of residence; and is ever alert at his assigned post and has no leisure to become attached through monastic contemplation and exclusive spiritual self-sanctification to a fixed dress, set manner of fighting, or permanent habitat. For him obedience means alertness, kept ever bright and shining by fresh exercise, to the divine call, a call conveyed to him by a gradation of human means. . . .

“ . . . Discipline . . . is simply the religious form of that ‘attitude’ in the ideal of Ignatius which resulted from his training as a nobleman. It is the opposite of what is impulsive, the sworn enemy of sensuality in every form, even the most refined. Discipline connotes shame, re-



serve, aristocratic reticence, instinctive shrinking from too great familiarity with any particular person, love of plan even to regimentation, flight from all that refuses to submit to control and regulation. . . .”

St. Ignatius continued to manage the affairs of the Society which he had established until his death of fever, July 31, 1556. He was beatified by Paul V on July 27, 1609, and canonized by Gregory XV on March 12, 1622. On July 25, 1922, at the beginning of his Pontificate Pope Pius XI declared St. Ignatius the heavenly patron of the Spiritual Exercises, and of all institutes, Sodalities, and associations which assist those who are making the Spiritual Exercises.

### **Continued Expansion**

Despite opposition, the “least Society” grew in numbers and importance until by 1750 it had acquired 22,589 members in 33 countries, but its activity and its promise were cut short by enemies bent on its destruction. On July 21, 1773, under pressure from the courts of Spain, Portugal, Naples, and France, the Pope suppressed the Society of Jesus. One historian, the Protestant Van Ranke, said, “The Jesuits were destroyed chiefly because they defended the strongest conception of the supremacy of the Roman See.” After the suppression, the 23,000 members dwindled to 600. Restoration in some coun-



tries led to the general restoration throughout the world under Pius VII on August 7, 1814, a day regarded by Jesuits as the second birthday of the Society of Jesus.

Since that time, the Society has developed far beyond what it was at the time of its suppression, with more than 33,000 members today, organized into 58 provinces and working in 74 countries. It has now 16,521 priests, 10,741 scholastics, and 5,637 brothers. The American contingent in this body is the largest of any nation: 7,751.

The vision of St. Ignatius can be better understood with a brief look at some of the highlights in the work of the Society which he founded. The work of the Jesuit apostolate may be divided into (a) education, (b) missions, (c) literary activity, and (d) retreats and ministry.

In 1547, with the opening of a college in Messina, Sicily, formalized educational work began among the Jesuits. Thirty-three colleges were approved by St. Ignatius and opened before his death. The first Jesuit college in the American hemisphere, St. Ildefonse, was set up in Mexico City in 1573, 63 years before the foundation of Harvard University. In the United States the Society is now conducting 41 high schools, with a student body of 25,235, and 28 colleges and universities with 97,183 students, 44 per cent of the national Catholic student total. They also

conduct 13 schools of law and 5 of the 6 Catholic medical schools in the country. Throughout the whole world, Jesuits direct 5,211 educational institutions, including 341 seminaries, of which the largest is the Gregorian University in Rome with an international enrollment of 2,552.

The mission work of the Jesuits began in 1541, when St. Ignatius wrote St. Francis Xavier that he should go to India. The leader sent missionaries in 1548 to the African Congo, in 1549 to Brazil and Japan, in 1555 to Ethiopia.

Today 1 out of every 7 missionaries of the Catholic Church is a Jesuit; 177 million non-Christians and 3 million Catholics are entrusted to the Society which labors in 71 missions, 6,640 mission stations, over 4,000 schools, 350 hospitals, and 16 leper colonies caring for 10,187 lepers. Of all native seminarians 1 out of 8 is trained by Jesuits. Of all the students in mission lands 1 out of 3 receives a Jesuit education. One-sixth of the Society, 5,593 members, today are working on the missions. Jesuits constitute the largest American religious group (585) doing missionary service outside the United States.

Jesuit literary work began with St. Peter Canisius, who has been called the Second Apostle of Germany because of his influential writing in defense of the Faith in post-Reformation Germany. One famous bibliography listed 18,000 Jesuit

writers, and today this listing would be longer by several thousand more. Father Daniel Lord published a dozen books, some 300 pamphlets and thousands of articles in 30 years. Today most Jesuit literary work is in the field of periodical publications. The Order today publishes 1,320 periodicals throughout the world.

Retreat work has been much worked at by the Jesuits. In one year Jesuits have conducted as many as 19,483 closed retreats ranging from 3 to 30 days, and made by hundreds of thousands. They also preached 7,415 parish missions. Throughout the world Jesuits now operate 174 retreat houses, of which 32 are in the United States with an average attendance of 2,000 lay retreatants each year. Various Jesuit works today include chaplaincies in hospitals, promotion of the Sodality of Our Lady (THE QUEEN'S WORK is the National Sodality Service Center of the United States), promotion of the League of the Sacred Heart, research in social science problems. The Institute of Social Order (3908 Westminster Place, St. Louis, Mo.) is an example of American Jesuit interest and activity in social problems, and is more or less duplicated in at least ten countries throughout the world.

Thus has grown the "least Society" envisioned by the little Spaniard who was so often misunderstood.

St. Ignatius was especially a human saint. He had lived, and so he knew what living was. He had been very ambitious, thus he became ambitious for Christ. He had hoped to become famous, but he then decided to make Christ more known and more loved. He had gone through some spiritual excesses in his early life, but his wisdom and experience led him to write a very sane directive for the spiritual life. He had used material conveniences and comforts as instruments for his own fame and glory, but now his purified outlook would make him use things only inasmuch as they contributed to the greater glory of God. He had dealt with many people while he was in the service of his king and now he would put all his experience and his observations into his relation with his special followers in the service of God. Throughout his works and his words, it was God's will and God's glory that were to be sought by himself and by each of his followers.

### **Love and Law**

But it was not God's will performed under the appearance of law and with cruelty that Ignatius sought. He would have all men observe God's wish from a spirit of love. St. Ignatius seems to have known that in order to win followers in his great task of seeking God's will to love he could not have a complicated regime set forth to be scrupulously watched and worriedly interpreted.

His big aim was the glory of God and his chief and only motivation was love of God.

Someone has said that his aims were always rather vague, during his last few years. It has been said that the success of his work may be attributed to this vagueness.

But it seems that the chief aim was so magnificent that it encouraged his followers to make their own attempts at execution and observance. In this way the means for attaining such an end are manifold and varied, as much as are the talents of each follower. In this way the end is primary, the means are secondary, so long as the right means are taken.

The greater the propulsion which the motive of love secures, the greater the achievement and the progress towards the end would be. This principle St. Ignatius most evidently knew, because without it the accomplishment of himself and his followers would never have grown to what it is.

St. Ignatius saw to it that the motivation which he had in establishing a mobile group for apostolic work in the Church would be handed on by means of his Spiritual Exercises. These are a prescribed set of meditations and conferences which a person generally makes under the direction of a Jesuit priest. It has been said that the Spiritual Exercises



furnish the very soul of the Society of Jesus. Much mystery has been put into the term by commentators at various times, but essentially the exercises are based on philosophical and theological truths which are the foundation of a Christian religious life. And they were not originated totally with St. Ignatius, for there is record of similar activity in several instances prior to St. Ignatius' first experiences. But he gave them a form and re-worked the psychological and spiritual processes so that he practically originated the practice.

Evidently then St. Ignatius Loyola is not a remote, inhumanly rigid figure, a stern-faced legend who cannot be known and who has no touch with the common man of our times. He was a very kind man, but a firm man. He was human, and he understood human beings. He was a saint, and as much as can be, he knew God. With all these traits there were mixed also various other talents and features, so that in a truly human way St. Ignatius was truly human, and fully human.



## A Litany of St. Ignatius

(for private use)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, have mercy on  
us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have  
mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity. one God. have mercy on us.

St. Ignatius, teacher of detachment and  
self-denial,

St. Ignatius, model of constancy and con-  
fidence in God,

St. Ignatius, father of saints and martyrs,

St. Ignatius, our advocate in heaven,

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins  
of the world,

spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins  
of the world,

graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins  
of the world,

have mercy on us.



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